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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/723,868	11/28/2000	Daniel Faneuf	FANEUF 00.02	6422

7590 06/13/2003

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EXAMINER

SMITH, KIMBERLY S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
	3644

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AFT

Office Action Summary	Application N .	Applicant(s)	
	09/723,868	FANEUF, DANIEL	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kimberly S Smith	3644	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 May 2003.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1,2,4,5,7,8,10-13,15-17 and 19-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,2,4,5,7,8,10-13,15-17 and 19-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on 16 April 2002 is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 12 and those dependent therefrom have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 1 and 21 are objected to because of the following informalities: with regards to claim 1, the Applicant has used the term "protrusions" to define the main coupling portion of the clipping device. However in claim 21, the main coupling devices are disclosed as first and second members having "protrusions" attached thereto. For consistency throughout the claims, two separate structures should not be defined with the same terminology. While not amounting to a rejection for being indefinite, the terminology within claim 21 should be amended to coincide with previous claim terminology. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10-13, 15-17 and 19-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson, US Patent 6,044,582 in view of Applicant's Admission of Prior Art, Figure 1 and related pages of instant application (Admission).

Johnson discloses a length of rope (12) having a loop formed at a first end (seen in figure 3) securing the rope to a clip (32). However, Johnson does not positively disclose the clip design with the exception that the clip is held by the lower end portion loop of the rope and that it be adapted for releasably holding a fish. Admission discloses a molded plastic clip having two or more opposing protrusions/elongated rigid members/first and second members (136, 138) rotatable/pivotal about a spacer (114), the protrusions/elongated rigid members/first and second members moveable between a first position and a second position, the protrusions/rigid members/first and second members urged towards one another by a biasing member (116) with a gripping force at the gripping portion (126, 128) capable of holding a fish without punching a hole in the fish and a ledge (120) spaced from the spacer for restricting movement of the biasing member. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the clipping device as taught by Admission as the clip disclosed by Johnson as a matter of design choice since the clipping device as taught by Admission includes a base part capable of being held within the lower end portion of the rope (area located beneath Biasing Member 116) and having a hook part adapted for releasably holding an item (i.e. a fish) as required by Johnson. As any clip is designed for the purpose of holding an item, a clip of any particular design has the same functional equivalency and it is therefore within the skill of an artisan to determine the most appropriate clip capable for use in any given situation. Reference is noted to Yaman JP 0369846 (cited in the prior action) in which a single clip design falls within the scope of utilization for drying clothes, fruits and fish. It is therefore considered to be well known in the art that clips used for hanging clothes (such as that disclosed by Admission) are also known to be capable for use in hanging fish.

Further regarding claim 21, Admission discloses protrusions disposed at first ends of the first and second member (126,128) extending towards each other and angled towards the spacer.

Regarding claims 2 and 13, Johnson as modified discloses the protrusion/rigid members, the spacer and the biasing member are molded as one piece (page 3, line 3 of Admission).

Regarding claims 4 and 15, Johnson as modified discloses the rope being a braided hollow polypropylene (column 1, line 45 of Johnson).

Regarding claims 5, 16 and 17, Johnson as modified discloses the loop being formed by inserting the first end of the rope inside the hollow rope a spaced distance from the first end (see figure 3 of Johnson).

Regarding claims 7 and 19, while Johnson as modified does not disclose the rope comprising a second end which is formed into a loop, it is well known that the addition of a loop in a length of rope (e.g., an animal leash) and is therefore considered to be within the ordinary skill of an artisan in the art to loop the second end of the rope to aid in the grasping of the rope.

Regarding claim 8, Johnson as modified discloses a marker for indicating the weight of an attached fish (column 1, lines 37-39 of Johnson).

Regarding claim 10, Johnson as modified discloses the protrusions being angled towards the biasing member (as seen in Figure 1 of Admission).

Regarding claims 11 and 22, Johnson as modified discloses the protrusion comprising a plurality of grooves (seen in Figure 1 of Admission).

Regarding claim 20, Johnson as modified discloses the rope being adapted to float on the surface of water.

Regarding claims 23-25, Johnson as modified discloses the clip having a lip stop (represented as protrusion 130A of Admission).

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Bakanowsky, III (US 5,104,088).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kimberly S Smith whose telephone number is 703-308-8515. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 10:00-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles T Jordan can be reached on 703-306-4159. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7687 for regular communications and 703-305-3597 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-306-5771.

kss
June 11, 2003

Charles T. Jordan
CHARLES T. JORDAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600